

FREE SILVER DEMOCRACY.

CHEAP-MONEY LEADERS ACTIVE IN THE WEST AND THE SOUTH.

AN ADMINISTRATION MAN WHO THINKS THE SOUND-MONEY ELEMENT WILL BE ROUTED AT CHICAGO-MCKINLEY'S STRENGTH.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Washington, May 18.—The fight for the control of the Democratic National Convention now raging between the free-silver and sound-money wings of the party seems to political observers to be an extremely even and doubtful one. The capture by the Administration managers of the Michigan Convention, which had been generally conceded to the free coinage men, was so surprising that for a fortnight the free-coinage leaders lost confidence, and the men who, under the stimulus and support of the Administration, are working for a sound money campaign at Chicago became correspondingly sanguine of success. In fact, for ten days or more many predictions were heard that the Michigan result showed the turning of the tide and practically assured the outcome at Chicago.

There has been, however, a reaction within the last few days, based on advices from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky. The surprising change in Michigan has spurred on the free coinage leaders in other States where conventions have not been held, and reports are coming here that the outlook is very favorable for the capture of the conventions by the advocates of a debased currency. The States above named are being flooded with speakers, and public sentiment is being strongly aroused, especially in the farming regions, by lecturers paid by the State League to address crossroads audiences in the hamlets and towns of the rural regions where the daily papers do not circulate extensively.

A prominent Government official, who has just returned from a two weeks' trip through the West in the interest of sound money, expresses the opinion that the demand among Western Democrats for free coinage is so strong that it cannot be overcome. "In Iowa," said this official, "the home of Governor Boies, I believe the State Convention will be at least two to one for free coinage. In spite of the splendid fight which the Administration Democrats are making in Illinois, the prospects are very largely that that convention will be controlled by Governor Altgeld and that a resolution declaring for free silver at a ratio of 10 to 1 will be adopted. The hopes of our people in Illinois are based upon Hopkins, who has been very successful in Democratic politics in Illinois. It seems, however, to be overlooked that Hopkins's success has been always linked heretofore with the co-operation of Altgeld. In the present struggle for the control of the Illinois Convention, Altgeld is leading the opposition, and, in my judgment, will win by a round majority.

"My investigations in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky lead me to believe that the free-coinage men will control in all. In each of these States, however, there is likely to be a divided delegation. Throughout the entire South free-coinage sentiment is in a majority, and delegates from most of the Southern States will be strong supporters of a free-coinage plank at Chicago and the nomination of a free-coinage candidate. I am unable as the result of my trip to express even a hope for the control of the Chicago Convention by the sound money men. It is safe to say that a man of ordinary commercial training is likely to listen to the arguments which are proving effective with the farmers of the West and South. A large proportion of the farm and stock raising community here is likely to be won through an inflated currency, to lift their mortgages and obligations at the expense of their creditors. The action of the Senate of the United States during the last session has also been to the advantage of the free-coinage men. To arguments in favor of honest money there is made in the West that the greatest of our legislative bodies, presumed to be the voice of honest men and statesmen, have a majority of thirteen in favor of a debased currency, and that the great proportion of the free Senators belong to the Democratic party. "So far as candidates at Chicago are concerned," continued the speaker, "indications point to the nomination of Governor Boies of Iowa. The talk of the selection of either Senators Teller or Cameron by a Democratic convention is about as likely as the selection of the choice of a Southern free-coinage man, because of the feeling that it would antagonize the old soldier vote of the West. Governor Boies will probably head the Iowa delegation to Chicago. He is a magnetic man and makes an excellent impression. He is likely to gain votes by his presence at Chicago. I look for the adoption of a free-coinage platform at the State of 10 to 1 by the Democratic National Convention, and the nomination of Boies as its candidate.

"As far as Republican sentiment is concerned, one hears talk of nothing but McKinley. Out side of the mining States there is a general consent that a straight-out, hard-money plank is to be adopted at St. Louis. In the prairie States of the West, there is a strong feeling to have been heretofore more or less prevalent among Republicans, it is surprising to note the great change of sentiment in favor of an out-and-out declaration for the single standard. No one there doubts that the Ohio man will be nominated on a platform definitely pronouncing against free coinage. It looks very much to me as if the issue will be joined between the two parties to the Democratic question. There is still to the effect that should this be the case the Populists and the men who are now forming the new silver party, irrespective of politics, unite in indorsing the Democratic free-coinage nominee. In this case there will be a pretty fight."

CONFERRERS FAIL TO AGREE.

THE SENATE REDUCTIONS IN THE NAVAL APPROPRIATION BILL A STUMBLING BLOCK.

Washington, May 18.—The conferees on the Naval Appropriation bill were unable to come to a full and final agreement to-day, and will to-morrow submit a partial report. The chief items of dispute are the reductions made by the Senate in the number of battle-ships from four to two, the modification of the provisions for torpedo-boats, the limitation of the price to be paid for armor plate to a sum not exceeding \$350 a ton, and the provision that to officers of the United States Army or Navy, either on active or retired list, shall accept employment from those engaged in supplying the Army or Navy with armament.

THE CASE OF PRIVATE BONIFACE.

SECRETARY LAMONT WANTS TO KNOW WHY HIS HEARING WAS NOT SATISFACTORY.

Washington, May 18 (Special).—The case of Private Boniface, of the 6th Cavalry, provoked some discussion at the War Department. Boniface is a member of one of the troops stationed at Fort Myer. Recently he was directed to report to Colonel Pennington's Board, at Governor's Island, for examination for promotion to the rank of second lieutenant. He appeared before the Board and went through the usual examinations acceptably with respect to his physical, moral and mental qualifications. The Board so reported to the Secretary of War. A few days ago. Forming a feature of the report there appeared the unusual remark that "the candidate is a hearing before the Board was not satisfactory." Remarks of this kind being exceptional, the note attracted the attention of Secretary Lamont. The Secretary desires to know more in detail what the Board means by the indorsement. Accordingly he has referred back the report in the case with instructions that more explicit information be furnished the Department.

The reply from the Board is expected at the Department in a few days. Presumably there was some good reason for the Board speaking as it did.

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